

January 14, 2009

OBEY SUPPORTS ACT TO HELP PROVIDE HEALTHCARE COVERAGE FOR NATION'S UNINSURED CHILDREN

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) said that he supported the SCHIP Reauthorization bill, which passed the House today, because it reauthorizes and improves the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which provides health coverage for uninsured children. This is legislation that President Bush vetoed twice in the 110th Congress.

"It's a moral abomination that any child goes without health insurance in America today," said Obey, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "This bill renews the existing Children's Health Insurance Program for the seven million kids already covered and allows it to provide health coverage for four million more. Something that's long overdue."

"In this recession, more and more parents are having a hard time finding affordable health insurance for their kids and the need for this legislation is growing every day," Obey added. "That's why we're trying to get this bill to President Obama's desk in his first few weeks in office."

SCHIP was created in 1997 to provide health care coverage for children in families that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private insurance, and has proved a successful and cost-effective program for providing health care. The bill passed by the House today reauthorizes the program for another four years, and provides funding to allow the program to increase by nearly 50% the number of children who receive coverage.

SCHIP allows Wisconsin to fund BadgerCare, the State's landmark health insurance program for working families, which currently covers over 62,000 Wisconsin kids. With the increased funding provided by the reauthorization, Wisconsin will be able to ensure continued coverage for those already in the program, providing dental care for kids, and giving the state the

opportunity to cover additional kids who qualify but are currently uninsured.

That is why, Obey noted, the legislation has been endorsed by dozens of organizations, representing millions of Americans - ranging from business groups such as the National Federation of Independent Businesses and the Business Roundtable to the American Hospital Association to such groups as AARP and Families USA.

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